

Billings City Administrator Weekly Report

September 22, 2022

1. **IBL Bid** - Skyway Drive and Skyline Trail Bid Opening: Bids for the BUILD Grant projects, Skyway Drive and Skyline Trail, were opened on Tuesday, September 20. While we still need to check the bids, it appears that both projects came in within budget. With the nature of the project, we expect we will see some change orders during the course of the project but with the bids we received, those should still be within budget. We will bring the bids to City Council for action in October.
2. **Land Use Planning Conference** - Billings is hosting the Montana Association of Planners annual conference at the downtown Double Tree Hotel next Tuesday (September 27) through Thursday (September 29). Many Planning Division staff members are heavily involved in the conference as the host committee, as well as making presentations and leading tours, and an extensive number of staff will not be available next week from Tuesday through Thursday. There may be times when no planning staff will be available for immediate customer service.

We are placing Facebook posts online and sending out email blasts letting our customers know of the limited or no staff availability during this time. We will be checking voice mail and emails periodically so customers are encouraged to leave phone messages and send emails; staff will be able to follow up when they are available.

We also are honored to have Mayor Cole and City Administrator Chris Kukulski both address the conference during welcome sessions and keynote presentations.

Thank you for your patience and understanding during this training opportunity and chance to showcase Billings to about 150 land use planners, attorneys, consultants, board and commission members, and elected officials from across Montana.

3. **International City/County Managers Association Annual Conference (ICMA)** – Thank you for allowing me to attend this year's ICMA conference in Columbus. I focused much of my attention on public safety, behavioral health, homelessness, employee retention and recruitment and networking. I'll touch on four of my sessions that may trigger some of your own research.
 - Sarasota, FL - with a homeless population 1,160 and named the "meanest City" in 2006 began to get serious about becoming a part of the solution in 2014. Captain Kevin Stiff, Coordinator of Homeless Response and Police Legal Advisor/Assistant City Attorney covered their programs. Their HOT teams are like ours and their attorney did a great job covering the key court decisions that guide this area of the law.
 - Irving, TX - Public Safety Mental Health Response Teams and Peer Support Programs were presented by their City Manager, Police Chief and Public Safety Wellness Unit Senior Manager (Dr. Betancourt is a counseling psychologist & city employee). Their peer support program for all first responders resulted from an officer suicide in 2016. Suicide is a leading cause of death

for officers in the US. Irving has reduced their arrest in behavioral health calls from 586 to 120 between 2014 and 2021 responding to 2,730 calls.

- Menifee, CA – Menifee University (MU). Their Human Resources Director, Assistant Human Resources Director and City Manager presented programs they have implemented to build an excellent culture allowing them to recruit and retain employees in a very competitive environment. Menifee has grown by 84% to a population of 105,000. MU has four (4) key program areas: mentorship, Menifee learns, leadership academy and wellness. Our workforces now typically consist of five (5) generations, each having different tendencies and ideas of what “work life balance” looks like. We all recognize that you cannot and should not over generalize, but the points are still relevant if you want to be an employer building an effective thriving culture serving citizens.
- Derreck Kayongo – closed the conference. Derreck is a successful entrepreneur and humanitarian who came to the US as a Ugandan Refugee. Go to YouTube and search The Global Soup Project. Derreck is innovative, hilarious, and inspired us all. Leadership matters – Corrupt leaders have stolen over \$870 billion from their Africa citizens between 2000 and 2015. I have 12 pages of notes if anyone wants to learn more. Next year we will be in Austin.

4. From the PIO Desk:

Group from Billings, Missouri travels 1,200 miles to build sister city relationship with Billings, Montana

<https://ci.billings.mt.us/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=2382>

Billings Fire Department recruits learn about fire behavior through doll house burn

<https://ci.billings.mt.us/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=2383>

Billings Fire Department raises awareness around most common emergency medical call – falls

<https://ci.billings.mt.us/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=2381>

Billings in the news

Billings Rims seeing increase in transient population

<https://www.ktvq.com/news/local-news/billings-rims-seeing-increase-in-transient-population>

Raising Awareness during Falls Prevention Awareness Week

<https://www.yourbigsky.com/local-news-2/raising-awareness-during-falls-prevention-awareness-week/>

Billings Fire Department training 12 new recruits over a 14-week academy

<https://www.ktvq.com/news/local-news/billings-fire-department-training-12-new-recruits-over-a-14-week-academy>

Like the famous children's book, this Billings tree keeps giving

<https://kmhk.com/like-the-famous-childrens-book-this-billings-tree-keeps-giving/>

Billings future home in Stillwater Building

<https://www.yourbigsky.com/billings-beat/billings-future-home-in-stillwater-bldg/>

Montana Avenue safer for pedestrians

<https://www.yourbigsky.com/billings-beat/montana-ave-soon-to-be-under-the-lights/>